

266. *DENDROCHELIDON LONGIPENNIS*.

Dendrochelidon longipennis (Rafin.) ; Salvad. t. c. p. 122 ; Sharpe, P. Z. S. 1879, pp. 246, 334 ; id. Ibis, 1879, p. 250.

Macropteryx longipennis, Sharpe, Ibis, 1876, p. 33.

a. ♂ ad. Benkoka, Sept. 15, 1885.

b. ♀ ad. Labuan, Aug. 19, 1885.

[This beautiful Swift is a common species, especially where the country is fairly open and old dead trees remain : these are its favourite perches.]

267. *CHÆTURA CORACINA*.

Chætura coracina (S. Müll.) ; Salvad. t. c. p. 124 ; Sharpe, P. Z. S. 1879, p. 335.

a. Ad. Pulo Gaya.

[Rather a local species, frequenting the vicinity of forests. I have noticed this Swift entering holes in trees, where no doubt they nest.]

268. *HIRUNDINAPUS GIGANTEUS*.

Several times seen flying high in Labuan.

[To be continued.]

II.—On the supposed Occurrence of *Strix parvissima*, Ellman, in New Zealand. By W. W. SMITH.

SIR WALTER BULLER, in concluding the histories of *Spiloglaux novæ-zealandiæ* and *Sceloglaux albifacies* (B. of N. Z. 2nd ed. vol. i. p. 205, 1888), writes: "The two forms of Strigidæ described above are the only ones inhabiting New Zealand of which we have, as yet, any positive knowledge." In a footnote on the same page, Sir Walter quotes from 'Out in the Open,' a series of papers by the late Mr. T. H. Potts, which have been published in several journals. Mr. Potts, referring to the occurrence of a "very small Owl" in New Zealand, says, "From the information that has been gleaned about this rare bird, it would appear that one of its habitats used to be the woods about the Rangitātā River; one was captured with the hand on the bank of a creek at no great distance from Mount-Peel forest." Having

lived five years near the gorge of the Rangitātā River, and having during the whole time collected and made lists of the birds of the district, and knowing all particulars regarding the two captures which Mr. Potts refers to as having occurred in the district, I think I am able to explain the matter clearly.

In May 1880, Mr. Mitton, then manager of Mount-Peel Station, brought me a small living Owl, which he desired me to stuff and mount for him. He stated that it had been captured with the hand the previous afternoon by one of the shepherds, on his way home from Peel forest. In handing it to me he remarked that it was "surely a different kind of Owl," as it was so much smaller than any he had seen. I, however, explained to him at the time that it was none other than an exceptionally small "Morepork" (*Spiloglaux novæ-zealandiæ*), and was no doubt a female, a fact which I subsequently verified while dissecting the specimen. It was an immature bird, the general plumage being slightly darker than many I have seen, and it lacked much of the distinct and neat markings of grey and white on the wings and breast peculiar to adult birds of that species. After being mounted, it was sent to some of Mr. Mitton's friends in Christchurch, but to whom I cannot at present say. A few weeks after the above-mentioned capture, the same gentleman brought me a slightly larger bird, which he had captured near the gorge. Since then I have taken two diminutive females in different localities and in similar plumage; but, excepting their smaller size, there was nothing to lead anyone with a slight knowledge of this little Owl and its variations to suppose them to belong to a smaller or distinct species.

Sir Walter Buller was careful to note that Mr. Potts "records the species on hearsay evidence"; but very little importance can be attached to such in the absence of a *bonâ fide* specimen captured in the colony, or at least some more positive proof of its existence here, as these birds belong to the most perfectly explored division of our fauna. I think, if such a species as the supposed *Strix parvissima* had existed in our country, it would have long ago come under the notice

of some of the many able collectors who have been long resident in New Zealand.

Sir Walter has explained (*op. cit.* p. 193) that there is "considerable variation in size" in *Spiloglaux novæ-zealandiæ*, and mentions one he received from Mr. W. T. L. Travers as "unusually small in all its proportions"; he also describes the specimen in the Leiden Museum as "equalling in size small examples of *Spiloglaux novæ-zealandiæ*"; indeed, the subject is so exhaustively treated in his great work, that no more need be added here. No New-Zealand colonist has ever had such facilities for collecting and studying the habits of our remarkable birds, and for examining collections in all parts of the world, as this distinguished ornithologist.

The fact of the specimen of the so-called *Scops novæ-zealandiæ* in the Leiden Museum being labelled "Nouvelle Zélande" *without more definite authority*, is, I think, sufficient to justify Sir Walter Buller in excluding the species from his work on the birds of New Zealand.

III.—*On the Coloration of the Young in the Psittacine Genus Eclectus.* By Dr. A. B. MEYER.

(Plate I.)

THE colour of the young of those species of the genus *Eclectus* in which the males are green and the females red has often been discussed, and every possible opinion has been maintained by various writers. I myself have had at different times very different and erroneous notions on this question, which, however, I believe I have settled definitely in my paper "Ueber die Färbung der Nestjungen von *Eclectus*, Wagl." ('Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Zoologie,' vol. xxxvii. pp. 146-162). In this I proved that the young males are green and the young females red from the nest, as had been asserted by some authors before. In spite of this, Dr. Gadow (Bronn's 'Klassen und Ordnungen des Thierreichs,' vol. vi. pt. iv. Aves, p. 585) has even recently (1889) stated that the young ones are "reddish, but not yet green." This is, no doubt, a mistake.

Two young females of *E. roratus* were figured by me in